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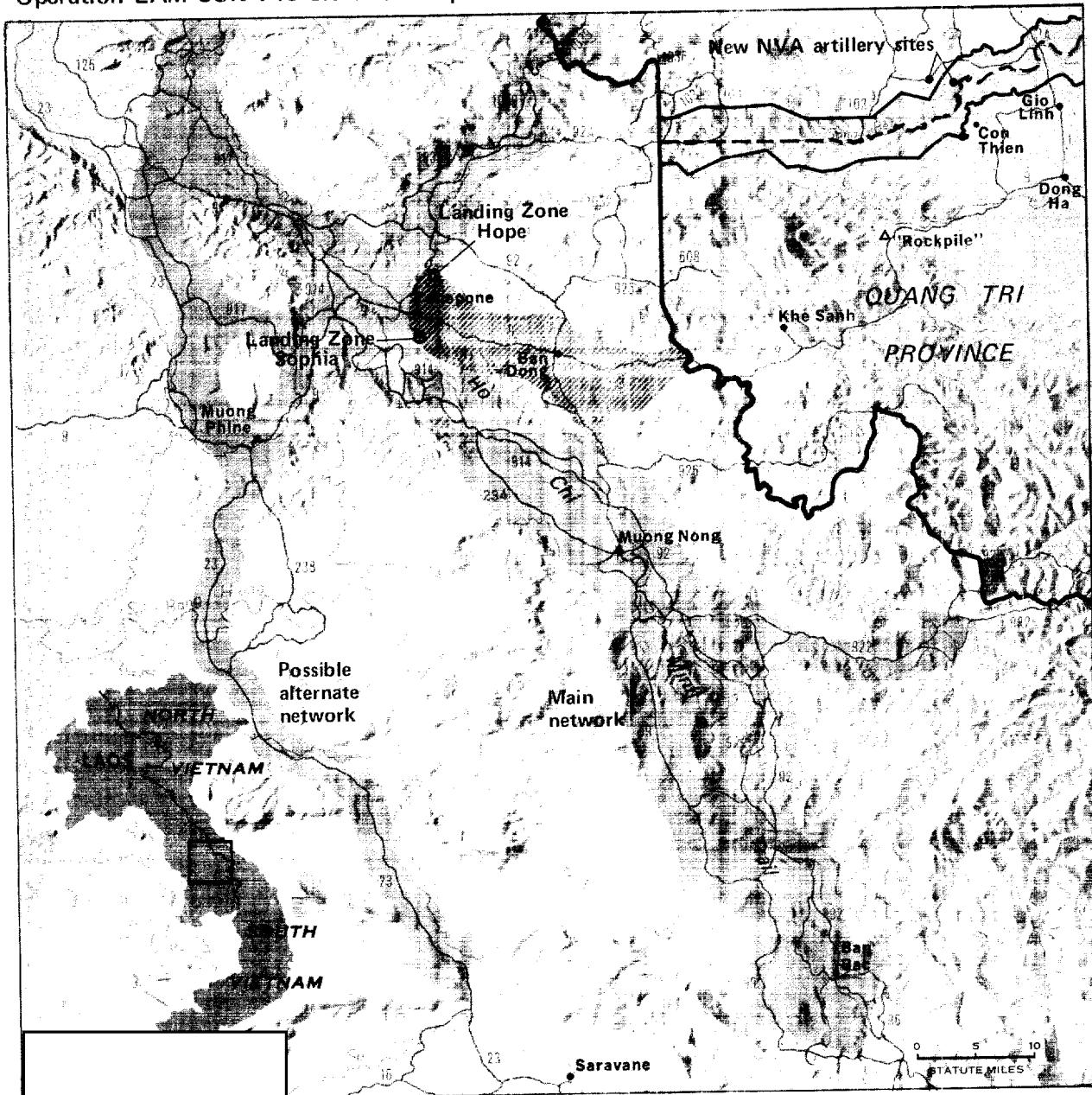
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Operation LAM SON 719 Situation Map

General area of ARVN operations



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VIETNAM-LAOS: South Vietnamese forces continue to meet little enemy resistance as they sweep through the Tchepone area from newly established bases on the surrounding high ground.

Communist losses have been heavy as a result of the South Vietnamese westward thrust. More than 200 bodies, killed by air strikes, were found by the South Vietnamese near landing zones Sophia and Hope. Furthermore, large quantities of munitions and supplies have been uncovered by patrols sweeping down into the Tchepone valley.

There is continuing evidence, meanwhile, that the Communists are trying to bring more pressure against allied forces and supply points inside South Vietnam.

Two new North Vietnamese artillery sites discovered in southern North Vietnam pose a significant threat to allied positions in northern Quang Tri Province. Both sites contain large-caliber artillery pieces, some with a range of up to 17 miles. Their location and range would allow enemy gunners to fire at allied targets along Route 9 from Dong Ha to a point near the Rockpile. Six Americans were killed and 22 wounded as the result of two large-caliber rocket bombardments of Khe Sanh and Quang Tri over the weekend.

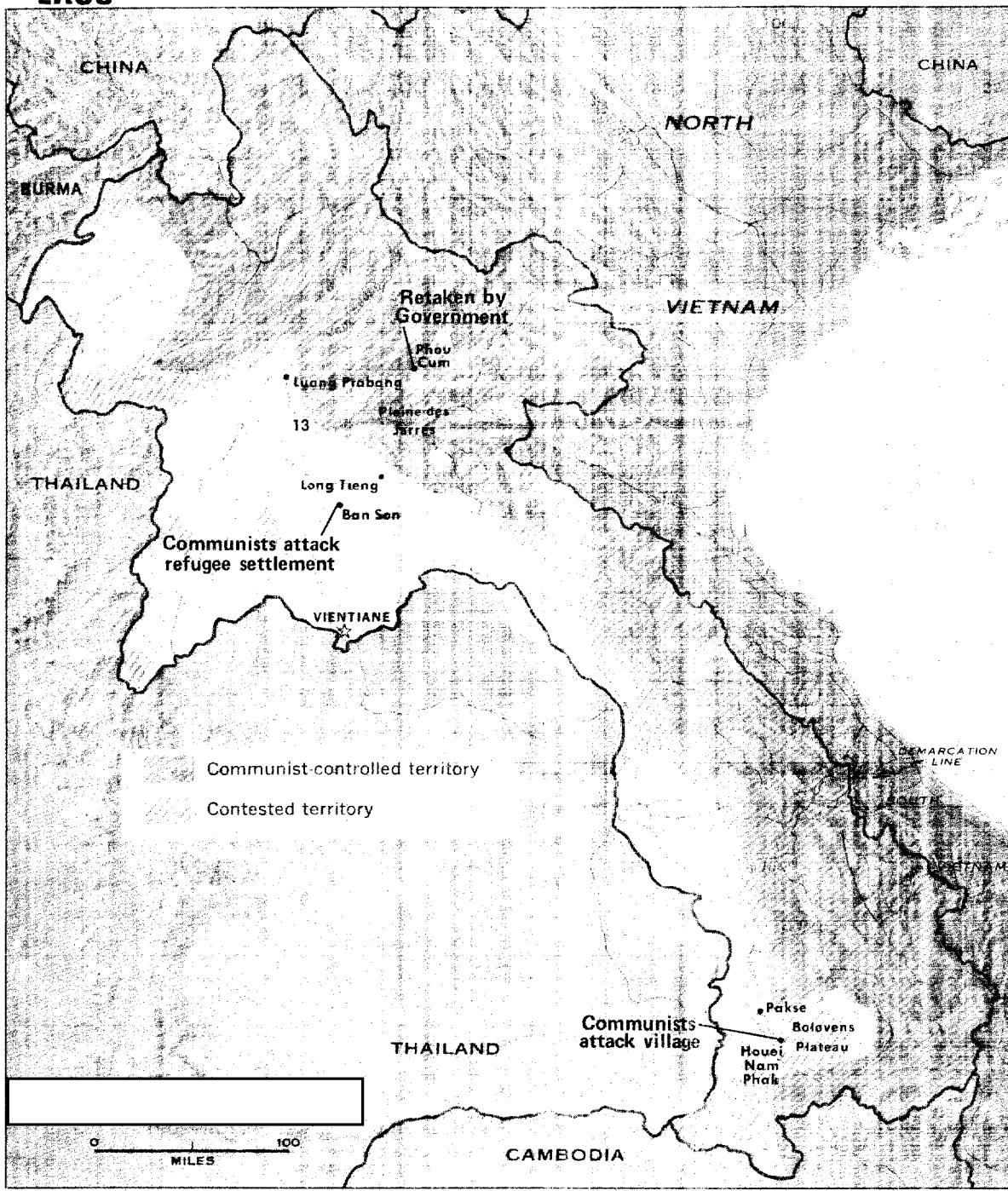
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LAOS: Ground action over the weekend was moderately light throughout northern Laos.

Clashes and shelling attacks continued around the Long Tieng complex, killing several irregulars and at least a dozen Communists. To the north of the Plaine des Jarres, government irregulars and village defense forces recaptured Phou Cum, which had been taken by the Communists on 22 February.

In the Luang Prabang area, the Communists kept up harassment of government positions north and east of the town. Two civilians were killed and four wounded when Communist units ambushed their vehicle 15 miles southeast of Luang Prabang on Route 13. The defenses around Luang Prabang itself have again been reorganized with the deployment of a paramilitary engineering company to secure the airfield and of two Lao Army companies some five miles northeast of town.

Two attacks on civilian facilities have occurred, perhaps signaling the beginning of a systematic Communist campaign to harass refugees and civilians in government-controlled areas. On 6 March, some 40 to 50 North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao attacked a refugee support center at Ban Son, about 20 miles southwest of Long Tieng. Nine civilians (mostly children) and three soldiers were killed, and sappers used rockets and satchel charges to destroy several vehicles and a refueling unit. On 7 March an estimated 100 to 200 Pathet Lao took over the village of Houei Nam Phak, about 15 miles south of Pakse. After robbing the villagers, they used rockets and plastic charges to destroy the dispensary, school, store, and the USAID office.

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EGYPT: President Sadat's rejection of a further cease-fire extension leaves uncertain Cairo's future military plans against Israel but does not necessarily presage an imminent resumption of hostilities.

In an address to the nation just prior to the expiration of the cease-fire yesterday, Sadat announced that "we cannot extend the cease-fire longer than we have done," and "we are not able any longer to hold our fire." Sadat added, however, that "this does not mean that political action will stop and that the guns alone will speak." Egypt's future military options against Israel were left open as Sadat stated that "we will watch, follow events, and decide for ourselves what we feel it is our duty to do and at what time and place."

In statements which appear to give evidence of Cairo's continuing interest in a political solution, Sadat expressed his confidence in the UN, in Secretary General Thant, and in the UN's Middle East mediator Gunnar Jarring. The Egyptian President called upon the big four powers to continue their interest in the Arab-Israeli crisis and directed a special plea at the US to "discharge its duty" and get Israel to agree to withdraw from the occupied Arab territory.

Sadat's move is at least partly designed to increase the sense of uncertainty in the Middle East and thus give added urgency to international efforts to end the Arab-Israeli confrontation. It also probably reflects pressures on Egypt's political and military leaders to achieve some tangible progress toward the restoration of their occupied territory. Many Egyptians are considered reluctant to accept the status quo without a foreseeable end. It is not clear how seriously Egypt's leaders view these pressures nor how long they believe they can resist the urgings for some form of military action.

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In any case, the uncertainty created by the absence of a formal cease-fire increases the chances for an independent, inadvertent or miscalculated incident. Sadat has also left open the possibility that Egypt may at some point put heat under the negotiating process by instigating limited military action. Under the present full-scale defensive alert conditions, any such incident could escalate rapidly.

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PAKISTAN: Events over the weekend have delayed, but have not averted, a showdown between East and West Pakistan.

On Saturday, President Yahya Khan announced that the National Assembly would meet on 25 March to begin writing the constitution. The announcement was to some extent a concession to East Pakistanis who had reacted violently to Yahya's indefinite postponement of the assembly on 1 March.

Yahya, however, also strongly criticized recent East Pakistani activities, pledged himself to preserve Pakistan's integrity, and implied that he was willing to use force to do so.

Later, Yahya appointed Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan--a tough but fair West Pakistani--as governor of East Pakistan.

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Z. A. Bhutto, West Pakistan's leading politician, has announced that his party will participate in the National Assembly. His earlier threat to boycott it was one factor which led Yahya to postpone the assembly meeting.

On Sunday, East Pakistani leader Mujibur Rahman replied to Yahya. Many had expected Mujib to proclaim East Pakistan's independence, but instead he announced a noncooperation movement during which East Pakistan would largely return to normal but with government functions suspended. Mujib also said that his party--which has a majority in the National Assembly--would not consider attending unless Yahya's first met certain conditions. Mujib demanded that martial law end, that the army withdraw to the barracks, and that power be transferred to elected representatives of the people.

Yahya has not yet responded. There is still room for negotiation, although he will be reluctant to comply with Mujib's demands and will be under some pressure to stop the noncooperation movement.

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TURKEY: The dragnet by some 30,000 police, troops, and plainclothesmen in search of the four kidnaped American airmen and their abductors continues amid reports of strong military pressure on the Demirel government to move quickly to restore law and order.

The search, still concentrated in the Ankara area, has spread as much as 70 miles southeast of Ankara. Ankara itself, however, is generally quiet.

The search at Middle East Technical University (METU) on Friday, although failing in its primary objective, resulted in the discovery of quantities of arms, ammunition, and explosives. It also led to the capture of two confessed members of the self-proclaimed Turkish People's Liberation Army (THKO). They stated that the THKO at present has no more than 20 members, most of them trained by Arab guerrillas in Syria, and has no connections with any other leftist organization in Turkey. They claimed, however, that the majority of the Turkish Revolutionary Youth Federation were either supporters or sympathizers.

The THKO intended to harass Americans residing in Turkey before turning their attention to Turkish landowners. They denied that they were involved in any recent bombings in Ankara, but admitted that the kidnapers had been living on the METU campus.

Turkish politicians, government and opposition alike, generally have condemned the terrorist kidnapers. Prominent opposition leaders and leading press representatives are behind the government's drive to recover the airmen and apprehend the culprits. Even some of Turkey's most well-known leftist spokesmen have spoken out strongly against the kidnaping.

Prime Minister Demirel continues to oppose a declaration of martial law, despite reportedly strong

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pressure from his military advisers. The firm measures taken by the government in connection with the kidnaping may help to dampen military criticism that it is failing to take substantial action to maintain public order. [redacted]

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The recent activities should ensure early passage of pending legislation designed to strengthen the government's hand in dealing with extremism in Turkey. [redacted]

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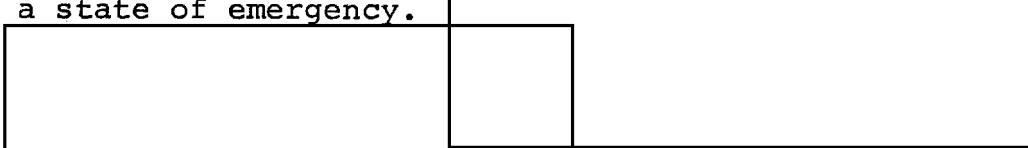
CEYLON: The attack Saturday on the US Embassy may have been the work of a band connected with Ceylonese Maoist Communists.

The mid-day assault, which resulted in serious injuries to one policeman and damage to several cars, was carried out by a force possibly numbering over 100 men. The embassy itself escaped serious damage, and no embassy personnel were injured. Leaflets left by the attackers were signed the "Mao Youth Group." Yesterday police prevented 300 demonstrators from marching past the embassy.

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The Che Guevarist movement in Ceylon is the work of a developing "new left" element, influenced heavily by Cuba, North Vietnam, and especially North Korea, and composed of a number of apparently dis-united organizations. The movement has gained considerable notoriety in Ceylon since early 1970. Mrs. Bandaranaike's leftist coalition government has been clearly concerned by the movement's threat to public order and late last night she placed the country in a state of emergency.



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COLOMBIA: Despite strong government pressure a 24-hour national work stoppage to protest social and economic conditions is scheduled to begin today.

The workers have extensive support, but they do not have full backing for their actions, and the strike may not be completely effective. Many workers are expected to remain at home, but student elements are likely to take to the streets in an effort to provoke the government into taking repressive measures. In Cali and Medellin, as well as in other smaller cities, students have recently been active; some have been killed and many wounded.

President Pastrana's use of security forces to contain the recent disruptions has been effective thus far, and he retains the support of a significant portion of the population, including the military and police. This support could be eroded, however, if more students are killed or if demonstrations continue over an extended period.

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JORDAN: The Jordanian Army may make another attempt this week to eject fedayeen forces from their strongholds in northeastern Amman, according to a report the US Embassy has received [redacted]

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[redacted] the army would like to clean out the areas near the palace to forestall any bombing or assassination attempts. Last night Radio Amman reported a shooting affray in which a palace functionary was killed and an army lieutenant seized by fedayeen. This incident and the reported arrest of two PFLP commandos on bomb-throwing charges provide the army with ample justification for another sweep against fedayeen positions.

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BOLIVIA: President Torres' concession to leftist student-labor demands has temporarily resolved the turmoil in the provincial capital of Santa Cruz, but anti-Communist campesino groups remain dissatisfied. The President, faced with a threatened national labor strike, granted the leftists' primary demands, including the transfer of a local military commander and payment of wages to workers who had participated in a local strike. Peasant groups responded by charging Torres with "betrayal" and warned that continued leftist dominance might lead to nationwide campesino protests. Torres, who seized power last year, has yet to consolidate his position and his administration has been continuously buffeted by competing political interests. [redacted]

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NORWAY: Kjell Bondevik of the Christian People's Party today began trying to form a new coalition cabinet from the four bourgeois parties. The selection of Bondevik on Saturday after lengthy negotiations among the center-right parties foreshadowed a possible minority socialist government. The cabinet negotiations, which Bondevik expects will continue for several days, could founder on differences over Norway's application to join the European Communities, a subject on which Bondevik has not taken a position. A strong will to establish a new coalition does exist among the four parties, however.

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